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D/I USAF CONTRIBUTION TO SE-51
"THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NEW INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT"

C. What is the Political Composition and Strength of the New Government?

2. What is the extent of the support for the new government in the armed forces and national police?

Although the Indonesian Air Force has maintained a generally neutral position in national politics, it is believed that the Chief of Staff and some other senior Air Force officers are favorably disposed toward the new leftist government and might have given at least tacit support to its formation. However, the majority of the Air Force personnel are subject to the leadership of junior staff officers who, strongly resisting the laissez-faire policies of the Chief of Staff, oppose Communist and pro-Communist infiltration into the Air Force and advocate its reorganization and modernization.

There is a possibility that these junior Air Force officers, together with the "17 October" reformist group in the Army and possibly some Navy elements, will succeed in organizing a military coup to take over the government before the present leftist trend develops much further. However, the necessary top level leadership for such a coup is not yet in evidence.

3. To what extent does the new government enhance the ability of the Communists to influence policy? What is the Communist strength or ability to influence policy and action in the leadership of the armed forces and the national police force?

There are, and were before the establishment of the new government, Communists in key positions in the Ministry of Defense and in the Air Force. There also continue to be others present who, though probably more nationalist

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than Communist, fail to see the danger of cooperating with Communists either within the Air Force or at the Government level. Principal among those in the Air Force holding this view is the Chief of Staff who is a Socialist but is believed to be influenced politically by his wife who is an avowed Communist. Prior to the establishment of the new government, the anti-Communist, reformist group of junior Air Force officers appeared to be gaining effective control of the Air Force, but continuing instability throughout the armed forces and the government as a whole tended to reduce Air Force morale and to provide opportunities for further Communist infiltrating. The strongly leftist orientation of the new Minister of Defense and of the Cabinet as a whole makes it appear certain that the reformist group will be eliminated from positions of influence and that, accordingly, Communist strength will be progressively enhanced.

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